

FACTSHEET E-COMMERCE

Author: NBSO Barcelona, Carmen Dragt

E-commerce in Spain

The E-commerce market in Spain has for long been small in comparison to the North-European market. However, since a few years, Spain is catching up in a high pace and is becoming a very interesting market for online companies with international ambitions. Several supportive initiatives were created and implemented by local authorities to give the industry an extra boost. Current internet penetration is estimated around 73%. Furthermore, according to Eurostat, 32% of the Spanish population made an online purchase during the past year. This shows that there are still many opportunities for the market to grow. Forrester forecasts an 18% growth per year, which is significant compared to the predicted 9% for the Dutch e-commerce market. The differences between regions in Spain are substantial; most online orders come from the urban areas of Barcelona, Madrid, Valencia and Basque. Least online orders come from the south of Spain. The total e-commerce revenue in Spain lays around 15 billion (2014).

Facts shortlist

- The average annual spending per person in Spain is €513
- The biggest online shopping day of the year in Spain: Cyber Monday
- The major online shops in Spain are Amazon, eBay, Mercadona, El Corte Ingles, Apple, Carrefour and Privalia.
- Euromonitor International reports that the leading retail categories in Spain are "Clothes and shoes" worth €1.2 billion and "Food and drinks" valued €1.1 billion.
- Online holiday shopping contributes to 25% of all online annual sales in Spain.

The rules of the game for Spanish e-commerce

Payment methods

Due to the Spanish e-commerce market not yet being mature, there are some challenges to face. A good example of this is the lack of one recognized online payment platform, such as iDEAL in the Netherlands. Although PayPal has been holding office in Spain since 2005, the Spanish consumer is not yet as confident with paying online compared to German or Dutch consumers. Also the most popular way of online payment, by creditcard, involves some obstacles, such as the need for consumers to first activate the card for "online" usage in person at their banks.

Service

Spanish consumers are less used to the availability of free customer services telephone numbers and also familiarity with free returning policies is low, resulting in little expectations at the consumer's side.

Logistics

With the upcoming online shopping market, there is more demand for fast delivery. National players like Correos, Seur and MRW are developing new strategies to live up to this new demand. Operations usually focus on home delivery and/or forming hybrids of pick-up locations. Having said that, it is worth to mention that in Spanish rural areas it is still widely accepted by citizen that within 24h post-delivery is not always doable.

Mobile e-commerce

The Spanish e-commerce sector differentiates itself by having the fastest growing mobile e-commerce markets in Europe. Mobile commerce makes up for 6% of the total e-commerce in Spain (2014). Moreover in the light of these mobile e-commerce opportunities, mobile payment services have been introduced since 2013 by amongst others Orange, Caixabank, Vodafone and Telefonica.

Forecasts for the market

According to Statista the sales number from business to consumer e-commerce will increase to 21.9 billion by 2017. The digital buyer penetration is expected to reach a rate of 64% in that same year.

Initiatives of local authorities

Barcelona Tech City is a non-profit initiative open to all those who are based in Barcelona, working in the digital and tech business, of which e-commerce especially. The main objective of Barcelona Tech city is to consolidate and stimulate an emerging sector, which will be capable of placing Barcelona as a world reference and European hub in online business. Furthermore, the aim is to link the tech sector to the Mobile World Capital and so attract more and more tech industry to Barcelona. Barcelona Tech City is a public private partnership between the municipality of Barcelona, many local partners, as well as global ones. Also the incubators and accelerators institutes operated by Barcelona Activa are involved in this project and offer spots to companies that align with the Barcelona Tech City mission.

In the last years, the city was able to attract large-scale international projects such as EBay Enterprises, Rakuten, king.com, Schibsted Media Group and Airbnb, and to keep fuelling the growth of a hub housing companies like Edreams-Odigeo, Privalia, Atrapalo, Trovit, Grup Intercom and ScytI, established start-ups such as SocialPoint, Akamon.

As a result of above named efforts, total revenue for companies within the tech sector as defined by Barcelona Tech City increased from €2 billion in 2012 to €6 billion in 2014. Recruitment of professionals by companies and start-ups in the city went up from 5000 to 9500. The year report of Barcelona Tech City 2014 concludes that their two pillars for generating growth upcoming yeast will be 'Investment' and 'Talent Attraction'.

Industry association

A-digital (Asociación Española de la Economía Digital) is an association of innovative companies and partners who believe and work for the development of the internet economy, digital media and new technologies. Located with offices in 5 cities, the association unites SMEs and large companies by a common goal: the growth of the digital economy in Spain.

Events

E-Show 25 & 26 March – Barcelona Fira

Professional Fair in Ecommerce, Digital Marketing , Mobile and Social Media

OMExpo & eCOMExpo– 27 & 28 May – Feria de Madrid

The future of digital marketing & The future of E-commerce

Global e-commerce summit 9 & 10 June – Barcelona Hotel Arts

In 2015 the theme of this annual summit will be: Strategies in a competitive global e-commerce landscape. Together with Netherlands Distribution (www.hidc.nl), the NBSO is organizing from 8th till 11th of June a trade business trip, including matchmaking opportunities and a seminar at the Global E-Commerce Summit, more info can be obtained via info@hidc.nl.

The best e-commerce events in Europe can be found [here](#).

Sources

Barcelona Tech City, 2014. *Study Technological and Digital Sectors Barcelona*.

Barcelona Tech City, 2014. *Welcome to the cluster that benchmarks Barcelona Tech Ecosystem to the World*.

Barcelona Activa: Barcelona City Council, February 2014. *Barcelona Data Sheet 2013: Main economic indicators for the Barcelona area*.

ABC Periódico Electrónico, 20th May 2015. *La filial de Paypal en España cumple diez años con 4 millones de cuentas activas*.

Ecommerce Managers Barcelona, Whitepaper 2014. *E-commerce kansen in Spanje*.

The Paypers, 2014. *Cross-border e-commerce report: Critical facts and insights for international expansion*